

SWEET TRANSVESTITE



COMPILED AND
EDITED BY
NOAH SCHIMNOWSKI

A COLLABORATIVE ZINE



GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Gender: Behavioral, cultural, and/or psychological ideas associated with a particular gender identity.

Gender binary: The idea that there are only two genders, male and female, and everyone must fall into one classification or the other.

Nonbinary: A person whose gender identity doesn't fit into the traditional gender binary structure of man or woman.

Agender: Adjective that describes someone who identifies as having no gender or who does not experience gender as a primary component of their identity.

Cisgender: Adjective used to describe a person whose gender identity is congruent, in a traditional sense, with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Gender affirmation: The process of making changes to recognize, accept, and express one's gender identity. This might include any combination of social, legal, and/or medical changes that might range from changing one's way of dressing and hairstyle, to having gender-affirming surgery, to changing one's name and sex designation on legal documents.

Transgender (sometimes shortened to "trans"): Describes the full range of people who identify with a different gender than the sex assigned to them at birth

Deadnaming: The practice of calling or referring to a transgender person by the name they used at a previous time in life and are no longer using, whether or not calling them by that name is intentional.

Gender-affirming hormone therapy: Treatments that lead to the development of certain secondary sex characteristics. Depending on what the person is trying to achieve, they might include anti-androgens, estrogens, progestogens, or testosterone.

Gender-affirming surgeries: Surgical procedures that help people align their bodies to more closely match their gender identity. They may include chest and genital surgeries, body sculpting, facial feminization, and hair removal, among other treatments.

Gender-affirming genital surgery: A number of procedures that can be done to align the genitals and reproductive organs with a person's gender identity. ("Bottom surgery" is slang for gender-affirming genital surgery.)

Gender-affirming chest surgery: Surgery to either remove or construct a person's chest, depending on what they want to achieve. ("Top surgery" is slang for gender-affirming chest surgery.) One surgical procedure used to masculinize the chest—called a bilateral mastectomy—involves removing most of a person's breast tissue; it is often accompanied by repositioning of nipple areola and chest contouring.

Facial surgery: For a transgender woman, treatments may include Adam's apple reduction and procedures to reshape the nose or other areas of the face. Surgeries for a transgender man might include jaw augmentation or enhancement of the Adam's apple.

Breast augmentation: Using implants to enlarge the breasts.

Assigned male or female at birth: The sex assigned to a newborn based on the physical structure of their genitals and other biological characteristics at birth, including everything related to reproduction, such as hormones, chromosomes, and certain internal organs.

Gender dysphoria: Distress experienced by some people whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth don't match. When this distress becomes significant, both the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the American Medical Association (AMA) recognize it as a psychological diagnosis.

Intersex: From a medical perspective, the term describes a group of congenital (or at-birth) conditions in which the reproductive organs, genitals, and/or other sexual anatomy do not develop according to traditional expectations for females or males. Intersex can also be used as an identity term for someone with one of these conditions.

Transition: The process of moving from the gender assigned at birth to becoming aligned with another gender identity (which could be anywhere along the gender spectrum). This happens over time and the trajectory is unique to each transgender person.

Trans man (or transgender man): Someone assigned female sex at birth but now identifies as a boy/man/male, regardless of whether they have had surgery. Avoid using the term female-to-male (FTM).

Trans woman (or transgender woman): Someone who was assigned male sex at birth but now identifies as a girl/woman/female, regardless of whether they have had surgery. Avoid using the term male-to-female (MTF).

Transsexual: A term used sometimes in the medical literature or by some transgender people to describe people who have gone through the process of medical gender affirmation treatments (i.e., gender-affirming hormones and surgeries).

Chosen name/Name used: The name a person chooses to use for themselves and wants others to use. This name may be different from the name on that person's identification or insurance documents.

SOURCE: Yale Medicine

Any slang or colloquial terms used throughout the zine will be defined in footnotes by the editor.

“Parallel Play” or “Vibin 2gether”
Stella LaRoh (she/her)
@stellalaroh (tumblr)



Kei (he/they)
@phon_tao (Instagram)

[you.]

A passing memory takes me by the hand and spreads like inkspill- it sings of younger nights of vice and voices carefree instead of fearing. It is soft and sweet, yet the thorns of something seemingly forbidden dig into my palms.

(Can I love you?)

(Not now. Not yet.)

(But I love much like Icarus had once loved the sun in every old legend written on stained paper: Far too close, far too much. Carnally. Hatefully. With resent. With care. With passion. With desire. Waiting does not come as first nature when I am with you.)

All comes in due time, but not this. I leave enough words unsaid to raise thousands of graveyards on my lips alone as I wonder- did I live with you once, in a time long gone? Did I dance on the edges of each cliffside and sing of a love so beautifully gruesome that it eats me whole? Did you love the person I am, neither female or male, but existing as some sort of in-between?

(A question for every instance.)

And yet, if I was given the chance to fall backwards into past-time, I would fix nothing and let the speaking be done between us time and time again.

I will close my eyes and allow myself this ash-stained love as I set fire to the part of me that does not allow it.

I will speak words of silver and gold in our sweet native tongue and let myself smile with you as if it is the last time.

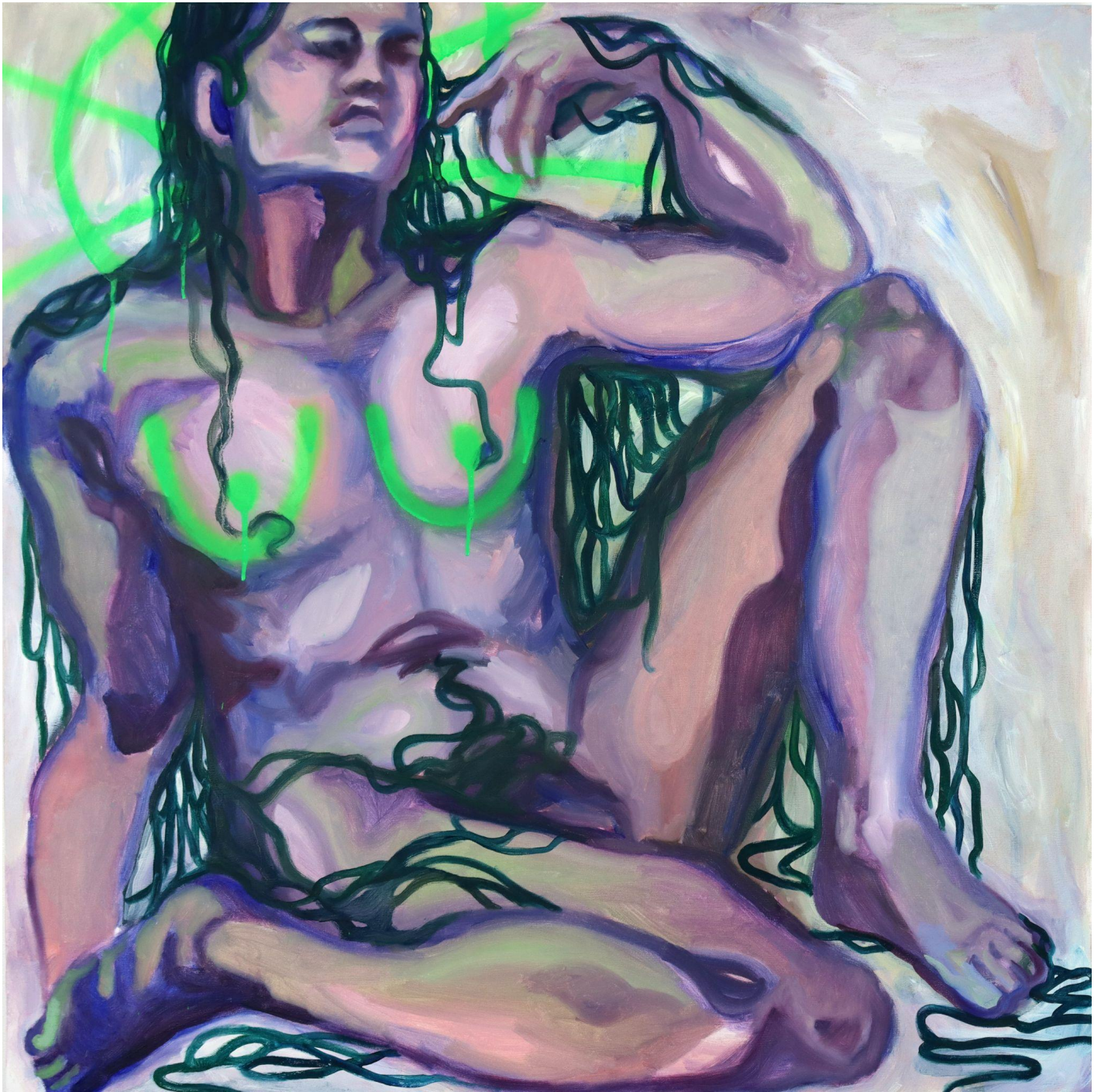
(I love you.)

(I know.)

“Son of Daughter, Son of God”

Arttu Hakala (he/him)

@r2emha (Instagram)



Izzy (they/them)
@lokidokeyartichoki (Tumblr)
@izzybee226 (Instagram)
@1smolpotato (Reddit)

“Puberty”

From a young age I knew my skin didn't fit me right. I could feel places where it's too loose and pulled away from my body. I could feel it puckering and bunching when I moved and I could tell it wasn't made to fit me.

When you're a child, you assume everyone is like you. I watched children pinch at the gathered skin of elbows and pull it away, I saw them tug at their faces to make each other laugh. I thought they were like me, that they too felt like it hung off them like ill fitting clothes. Asking them about their skin made the other children uncomfortable. Nobody knew what I was talking about. They didn't let me have the chance to ask again.

There were times when I felt like I could fix the issue myself. Like when I'd lay in the grass under the sun and feel my skin tighten from the heat. I would be out there for hours, hoping that maybe I could shrink my it to fit my form. That maybe my skin would harden and stop growing. The only thing that came from it were terrible sunburns and the false hope that flared in my chest when I could peel it from my shoulders.

Someone told me that every cell in the human body is replaced every seven years. Based on that knowledge, I thought that perhaps I would fit my skin the summer I turned fourteen. That was a long way off, but I've heard parents say that you'll grow into your body. I hoped that was the case.

My parents knew about the problem, but there's only so many times you can be taken to the doctor. Taken to a therapist. Taken to a psychiatrist. Taken to a gender counselor. There are only so many times as an eight, nine, ten, eleven year old that you can be told there is nothing wrong with you. You can only cry wolf so many times before you realize nobody cares that you see one. It becomes normal. I still didn't fit in my skin, but I didn't talk about it anymore.

When I turned fourteen I stood in front of the mirror in the bathroom and pulled my cheeks away from my teeth. There was a reassurance that my teeth, gums and jaw structure could be seen without my flesh getting in the way. I would gnash my teeth together and revel in the feeling of otherness to see them bared without lips in the way. I did it every night and felt better for it.

That fall I read a short story where a woman slathered her husband in cooking oil and let him tan on the beach. His skin turned brown and cracked off, but in his determination to be tan he kept covering himself in oil until he burned his skin down to the muscle. I asked my science teacher if that was actually possible. I never got an answer.

Adults tell you that puberty is when you really grow into your body. When things become proportional. When your feet match your legs and your arm span is close to your height. By the time I was sixteen I still didn't feel right, but it seemed like my skin didn't have as much give as it used to. It didn't bunch in places and I didn't notice all the places where it shifted as I moved. I assumed that this is what growing into your body meant.

I was wrong.

Months before my seventeenth birthday I realized my skin was getting tight, like when I had sat out in the sun but over my whole body. The middle of my lip would split when I smiled too wide. I couldn't stand to wear most clothes because they were even more restricting. The skin around my nails peeled back from the nail bed as they grew. I couldn't raise my eyebrows without causing tiny tears near my eyes. Bending any joint soon became impossible because the skin would split across.

My parents didn't know what to do with me. They cried and called doctors and screamed at each other. My parents weren't sure I was going to make it to my birthday in July. At some point it seemed they gave up. I laid in my bed on my back, trying not to do anything. Each movement was painful but I could feel a restless energy filling the spaces between myself and my skin. It felt like lightning, like power crackling in my bones and gathering behind my teeth. It felt like if I didn't use it or get rid of it I would die.

Screaming only does you so much good when nobody wants to help you.

It was a week shy of my seventeenth birthday when I finally realized what was happening to me. I stared in the mirror and leaned against the counter. I could see how thin my skin was stretched over my body. I saw the rips and tears as it couldn't hold me in any longer.

I was finally outgrowing my skin.

I curled against the counter, screaming as my spine erupted from my casing. I could feel the air conditioning on my back and cried. Minute by minute I worked my way out of my skin. It was hot and slippery, making wet sounds as it sloughed onto the floor, onto the counter, into the sink. My arms were fed back out of their skin sleeves, sliding out red and slick. I slowly peeled my way down my stomach until I was too tired, sobbing and hiccuping. In my exhaustion I dropped what skin I was holding and gravity pulled most of it down and away.

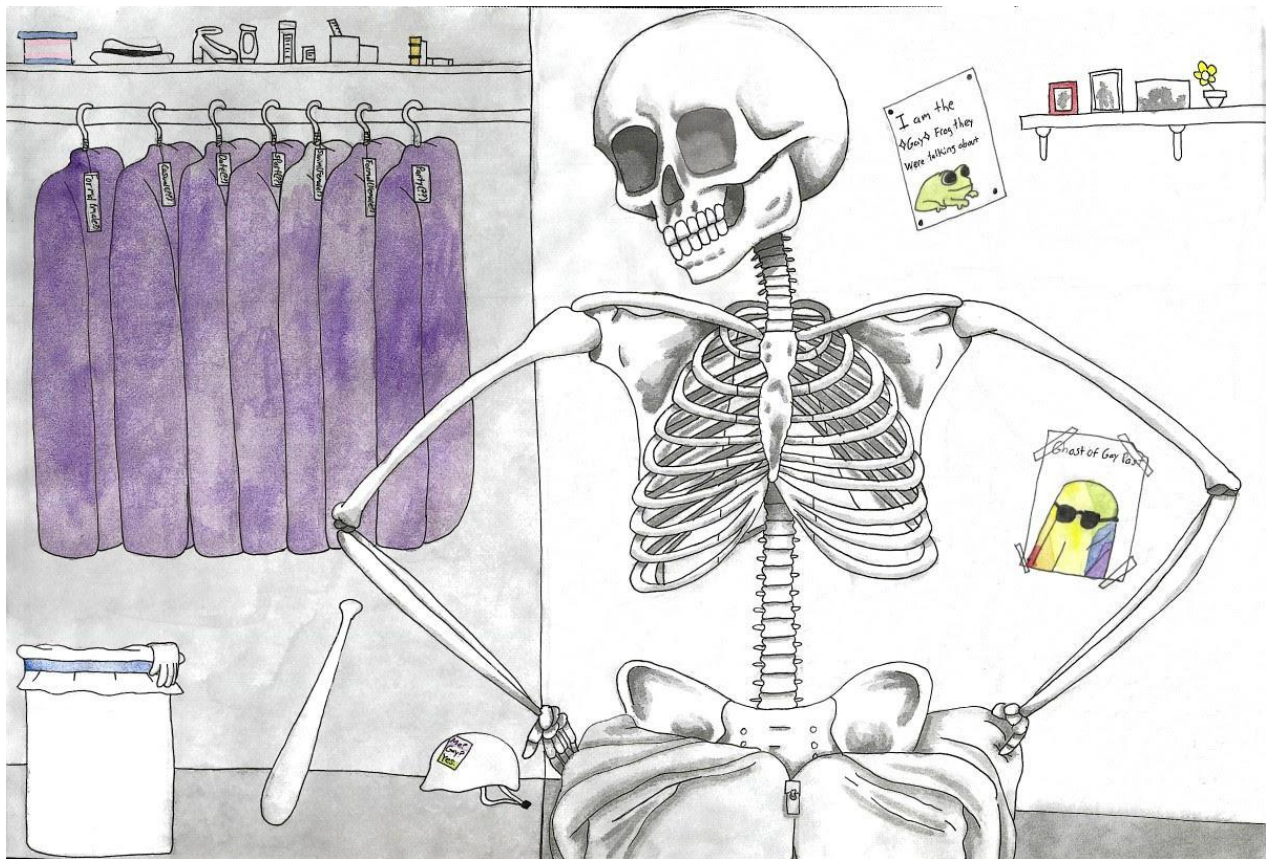
I stared at the heaps of discarded flesh on the floor, at the puddle of blood and fluids seeping away from it; completely numb to all feeling and shaking from adrenaline and the effort.

Outside, the cicadas were screaming.

“Skeleton”

Harlequin Mejia, (pronouns vary)

@angelwithhornsartstudio (Instagram)





Does it ever astound
 How the new hair sprouting on my legs, my
 stomach, my arms, my face
 Resemble the spring grass and flowers
 erupting from the dirt
 And chasing away the winter depression?
 My voice wavered and changed like the
 wind
 Flowing from a summer warmth to autumn
 breeze to winter storm.
 The best friend who gifted me my first
 binder
 Shouted with joy on their plane ride home
 when I texted them the news.

Pat (he/him/his)

C₁₉H₂₈O₂

“gender anarchy”

Ash (they/them)

@transrevolutions (Tumblr)

I’m the one they are afraid of,
the one the movement’s made of,
the proof that there’s more to the truth
than meets the eye, I look up at the sky
and I feel proud to be alive, fists high
a raging cry of resistance and insistence
we will make them listen
we are not ashamed

I’m not Adam, I’m not Eve,
I’m the universe itself, the stars and galaxies,
more than their definition or derision
I envision worlds beyond their comprehension
there’s no apprehension here, just ascension.
I’m the third space between that they said humans couldn’t reach
I’m more than dimorphism, more than the box they put me in
and I will be part of the solution
comrades, we’re the revolution

I’m speaking for my siblings
and my sisters and my brothers in Utah, Florida, Tennessee
and all the places that we’re fighting for our rights to be
who we are, to have autonomy, to be free
and it’s not just us because I stand in solidarity
with Alaska, with Atlanta, hey, long live Tortugueta
defend everyone whose rights have been denied
this is our time to shine, you will see
we are gender anarchy

this is a call to action
a rejection of reactionary thought
we will not be bought or be taught
that we are anything but worthy
we will not wait for Washington to save us
we will be our own salvation, the creation
of a world of liberation, history repeats
every movement has this moment of us facing our opponents
but I believe that the future is approaching
and I see that this future is for love and for equality
can’t you see the power that we have as a community?
we are oceans, we are skies that they can’t categorize
and we will be the light because the movement never dies
we will rise
we will rise.

“Slimy Creature”

Heina or Micheal (he/they)

@rays-nut-call-that-rut (Tumblr)



“Transformation Adoration”

Pat (he/him)

I adore the stories we tell with our trans bodies.
All of our scars and legal documents and names
The sacred places we consume, rub, or inject our
Knights in shining armor
Protecting us from cis self-hatred.
I’ve never loved my body more than when I started testosterone
Nothing that I had hated before changed
But I began to see myself more and more with each passing week.
Our transforming bodies reflect a community accepting
Of metamorphosis
A community of forgiving yourself
It’s in our nature to reckon with differences,
To face the fear of the unknown head on.

I’m so stupidly angry
At transphobes and their bigoted double standards.
Trans people living too aggressively and predatory
Like men.
Trans people living too weakly and foolishly
Like women.
Depending on where they need us to be in their
Pointless
Mind-numbing
“Debate.”

I want us to define ourselves.
To take those standards and break them in our fists,
Wear the joy on our faces with laughter and smiles,
Defiant of those who pray for our downfall.

“Reading my transition through generations of family memory.”
Leah Long (she/her)
@leahesque (Tumblr)



Roan Rosser (he/him)
@roanrosser (Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook)
“The Lies in the Mirror”

Emily hadn't even wanted to go to the thrift store with her best friend, but Nina had harangued her until she'd agreed. “You can't just hide in your house all the time. And you need to come. You have the best sense of style.”

Being with Nina was draining, more than a huge party of people. Still, she had a point, and Emily needed some clothes for work, anyway.

So Emily had put on her bulkiest hoodie and gone with her. Thursday morning, and the thrift store was practically, blessedly, empty. They had to walk past the glass display case that housed all the expensive items to get to the racks of clothing.

A massive antique mirror, the edges gilded in what looked like gold, but was probably painted copper, hung on the wall behind the counter. But that wasn't what caught her eye. As she walked by, she could have sworn the mirror showed... well... not her.

Emily stopped and backtracked to stand in front of it. A stranger stared back at her. A young man with a patchwork beard and messed hair the same mousey brown as her own. He wore a tight fitting t-shirt. Her heart skipped a beat. She touched her face, imagining she could almost feel the scratchy beard hair under her fingers. The man in the mirror mimicked her movement.

“Emily, what are you looking at?” Nina came to stand beside her. Emily jumped as Nina's reflection came into view. Only, like her reflection, it wasn't Nina. It was a black-eyed creature with fangs and bright red lips.

“Oh, my.” Nina stared at the mirror. “This must be one of those fun-house mirrors. But why is it making me a monster and you a handsome guy?”

Emily shrugged. “I don't know; it's fun, isn't it?” She wondered what other people would look like in it, but it was deserted enough that it would be awhile before someone else walked by.

She let Nina drag her off to the clothes section. But she couldn't stop thinking about that mirror, even as Nina kept accosting her for opinions on this shirt and that. Taking her energy one pin-prick at a time.

When they went up front to check out, Emily asked about the mirror. It wasn't that much, so she had it added to her purchases. Honestly, she would have bought it no matter what they asked.

Nina wrinkled her nose. “You want that ugly thing? And here I thought you had style.”

Emily ignored her. The employee who rang her up in the mirror looked normal, to Emily's disappointment.

She hung the mirror on the wall right next to the front door. It became a kind of game to guess what people would reflect in the mirror as they came inside.

She found that more often than not, she was wrong in her guesses. The pizza delivery man she guessed would be a professor, given his glasses and serious look, was a beautiful woman. Her father was a screaming siren, with wide eyes and harpy wings. Her mother, who'd been a stay-at home mother her whole life, appeared as a scientist wearing a white coat and a clipboard. A few people, like the cashier at the store, appeared the same as their real-life counterpart.

Still, her favorite was her own reflection. She'd spend hours staring at herself as a man.

Every day, it changed slightly too. Some days she was clean shaven, some days a full beard. The clothes changed too with the season.

The doorbell rang one of those days when she'd gotten lost in the mirror. The sound brought her out of her stupor. She shook herself and answered it.

Nina stood there, arms crossed, glaring at her. "You haven't answered any of my texts or calls, Emily."

Emily bit her lip. Even the thought of doing anything else with Nina had left her exhausted and she hadn't known how to turn her down gracefully. "I'm sorry, I've been distracted."

A bar of light flashed on Nina's face and she winced, holding up her hand and squinting against the light. "What is that?" Her eyes widened. "That stupid mirror. Of course it is." She pushed her way past Emily into the house.

"Hey!"

"Is this what's distracted you?" She pointed at the mirror. Her fanged, black-eyed reflection pointed back at her.

"I don't have to take this from a monster!"

Nina jumped back, her face red and her hands clenched into fists. "Don't call me that! It's this mirror. It's bewitched you." She grabbed the edge of the frame.

Emily screamed and lunged, but Nina fought dirty, slashing at Emily with her acrylic nails even as she yanked the mirror from the wall. Emily dived to catch it, but the edge of the mirror hit the tile of the entryway and shattered. Glass pelted her and dug into her knees when she landed. The gold gilded frame landed on its face with a resounding thump.

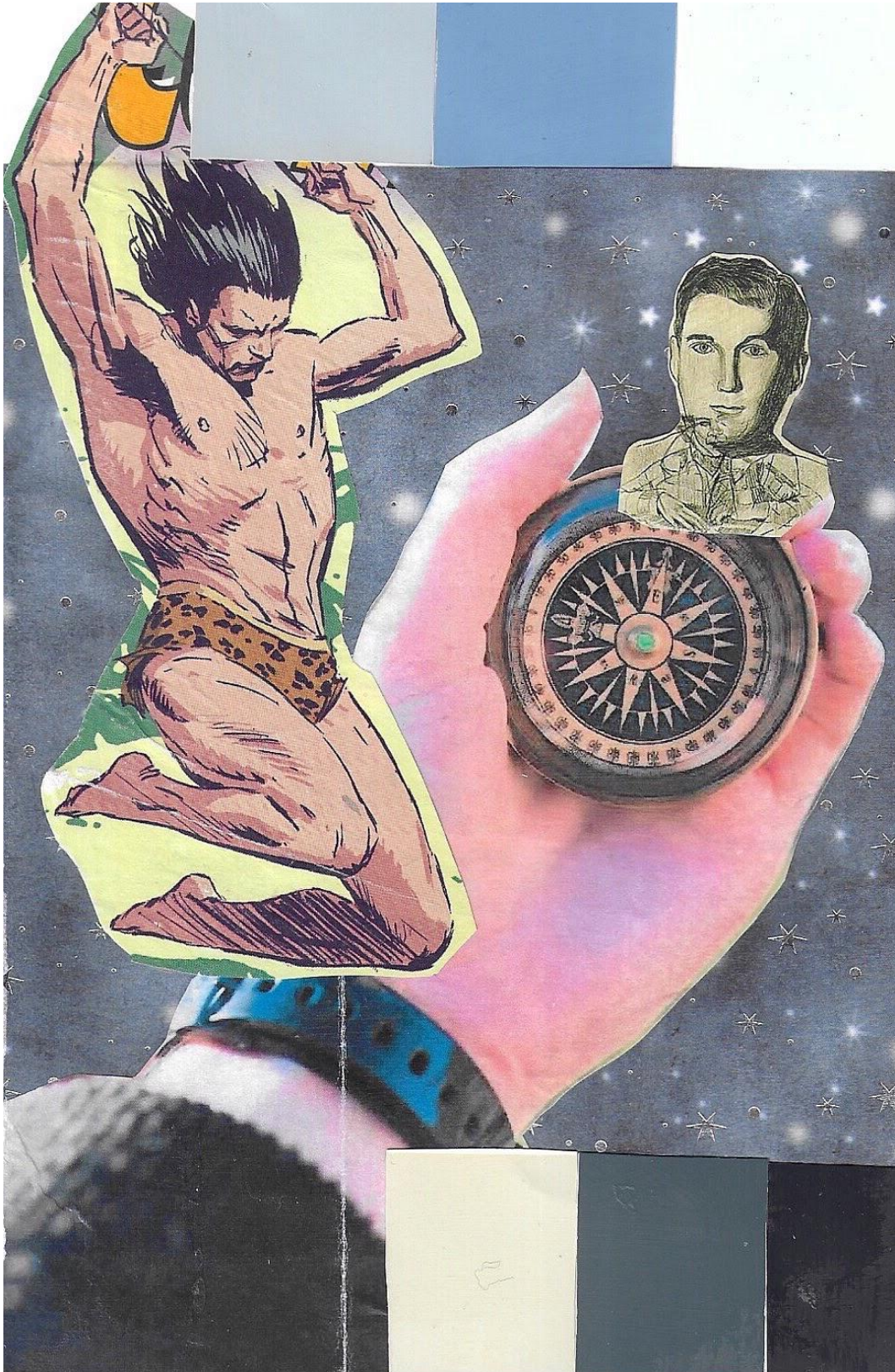
She picked up a large chunk of glass, heedless of the cuts the sharp edges made on her palms, and turned it over. Her own face and long hair stared back at her. Not the boy she'd come to love.

"What have you done?" Emily sobbed, tossing the fragment aside. Maybe another. She scrambled forward, leaving a trail of blood as she checked all the large pieces. Nothing. They all showed the same thing.

"I'm not sorry," Nina declared, stepping on a large shard that Emily was reaching for and grinding it under her heel. "This thing was telling you lies. You'll thank me later, you'll see." She stepped around Emily and left.

The line about mirrors showing the truth was the biggest lie of all time. But as she swept up pieces of the mirror and cleaned up, she resolved to make that appointment with a gender therapist. Perhaps it had bewitched her, making her put off something she knew she'd wanted for a long time. Now she'd make that boy in the mirror her reality, and not just a reflection.

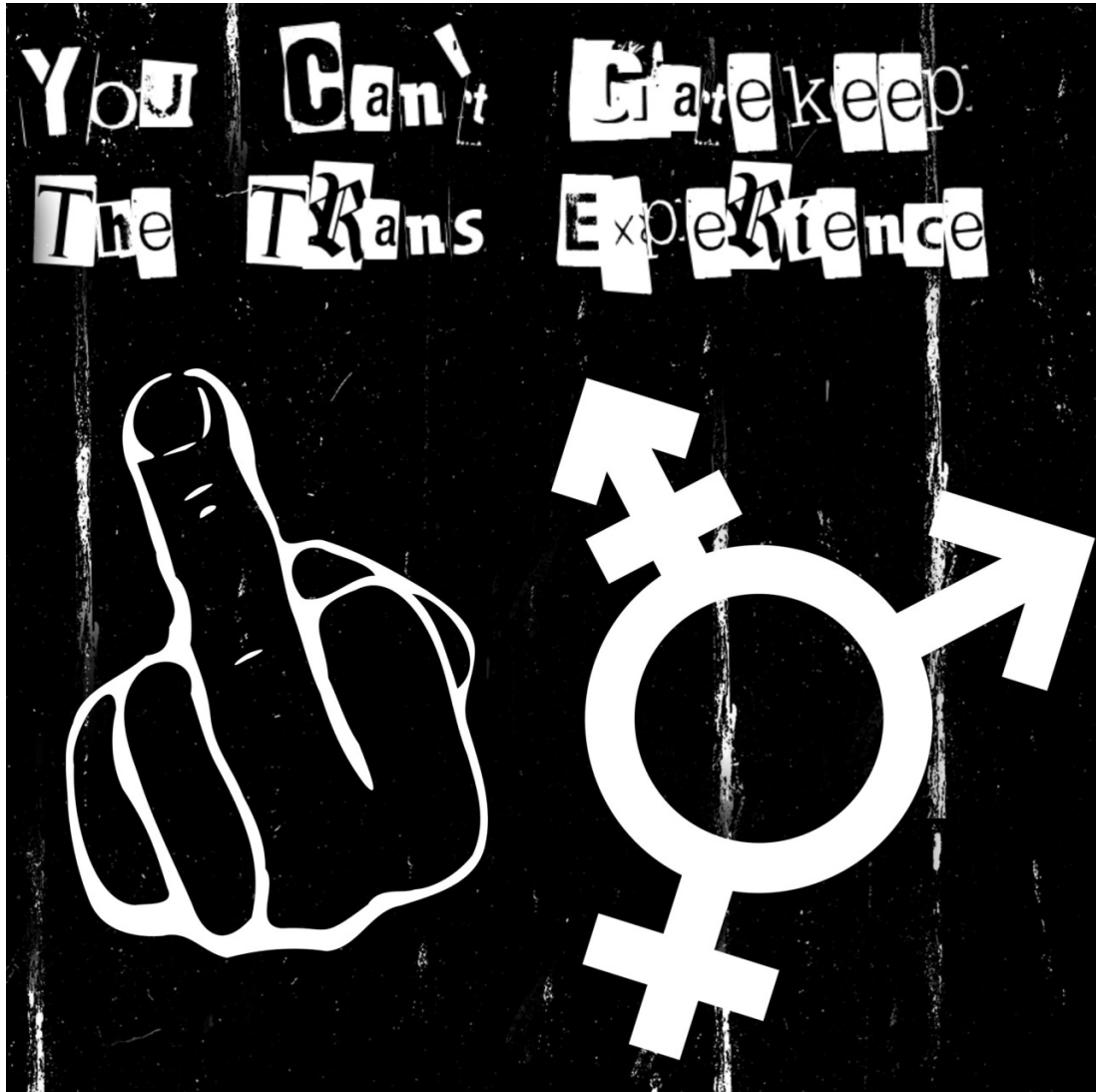
“makin’ a man”
Noah Schimnowski (they/them)
@chomperz__ (Instagram)



“You Can’t Gatekeep The Trans Experience”

Punk (he/him)

@polyamorouspunk (Tumblr)



INTERVIEW WITH MAY, TRANSFEMME TRADES WORKER

Noah: Thanks for taking the time to answer some of my questions. This interview is going to focus on your experiences working in construction as a transfemme, but first I would like to ask you to introduce yourself. What's your name (as you would like it published)? Your pronouns? And how would you describe your gender identity? Use whatever words you feel comfortable with.

May: I'm May, I use she or they, and gender wise it's largely "refuse to participate". Tossup as to whether that's a lack of safety to really interrogate things further or just personal disrespect for what I view as an abstract and arbitrary rule, though I experience top and bottom dysphoria and transfemme HRT was something I pursued almost immediately on learning it was an option about five years ago.

Noah: Before we get started, I know that you had an unfortunate run-in with law enforcement/mental health services recently. Could you explain what happened in as much detail as you feel comfortable with?

May: I was a little too honest with my therapist, which resulted in cops yelling at my apartment window. They only went away after I insulted their parasitism of public resources and promised to go to the ER for suicidal ideation. I did as I said, thanks to my own (and a close friend who came with's) hope that I could actually get help. I went to an ER below the bougiest psych ward we knew of in my insurance, and a dozen hours later I was getting all my fluids checked and stripped of all belongings. I persisted in good faith for a couple of days, but after enough ignored pleas for my spiro, supervised access to shaving per established policy or even enough caffeine to overcome my fight-or-flight enough to take a shit despite the random, unannounced spectators, I kinda went a little apeshit. The last straw was my toothbrush being confiscated for no stated reason, which I discovered after fleeing a group sesh focused on body-presence meditation.

Before I knew it, I was in a comical hostage situation where I was threatening to rip a hole I gnawed in my suite's couch open wider, demanding all of my previous requests as well as a retreat of the crowd of staff, being threatened with restraint and sedating injections in turn. They clearly valued that upholstery, because I did manage to talk them down from violence as well as secure one cup of genuine, smuggled-in cold brew and my antiandrogens as prescribed. Later that evening though, the nurse who was calling to escalate during the previous situation just kinda jumped my shit out of nowhere and called in backup when I struggled and tried to flee. His writeup explicitly cites me "resisting after being touched", which is why they put their hands on me. With enough help, said massive former NFL fullback, they did successfully subdue my hundred-and-fifty pounds of bone ass, fucking up my dominant hand in the process - at which point I was strapped to a gurney and wheeled to a room where I got terrifying hallucinations in the dark from the various things they shot me up with in the kerfuffle. I was kept in there for an hour or two, depending on which part of my chart you believe, only let out after I stopped crying for water, a restroom, my hands, or to have my hair removed from my throat. I was discharged the next morning with no further care.

Noah: If anyone wants to help May with survival needs for the immediate future - rent, groceries, etc. - the QR code to her Venmo account can be found at the end of the zine.

May: Appreciate you including that, and yeah anything that can be spared would mean a lot at the moment. I'm not able enough to make it without housing again, but if I do make it back to stability I'll of course go back to pursuing what I can spare to mutual aid in turn. <3

Noah: Okay! With all that out of the way, I'd like to ask about your general work experience. You were an electrician for a while, are you still doing that?

May: Sorta! I've moved away from working on construction sites and into a more corporate traveling maintenance position, though I still do small projects on the side.

Noah: Did you ever come out to your coworkers?

May: Yes, recently at my present job. It was a hard call to make and created a lot of new issues, but I was ready to quit (partially over company culture tolerating queerphobic discussion) so I went for it.

Noah: How did your coworkers react? Either in corporate or on job sites.

May: In my office, pretty mixed! Most of the men immediately started treating me differently or avoiding me, most of the young folks and women were quietly super supportive. I've bumped into a couple in the corporate structure outside CA who wanted to show allyship as well, one in Texas and another in Missouri, but generally it's just been tactfully avoided. My boss has said in no uncertain terms that he will comply with present law despite his Catholic beliefs, so I still do not see it being a secure workplace in the long term. Customers have been generally on the awkward or hostile side and with rare exceptions I still just let them misgender me to make my job easier and avoid having the kind of discussions around queerness you see on construction sites.

Noah: Damn. I was really hoping that this would be one of those "they overcame their differences to work together" stories you hear sometimes. I don't want to make any broad, sweeping generalizations about blue-collar men, but I can definitely remember how some of them treated me when they saw me as a girl. What specific encounters have you had on job sites regarding your gender... I don't know, situation?

May: I've only had, like, two experiences that made me feel genuinely unsafe for who I am and those are whole cans I'd rather not crack open; it's more the background radiation of bigoted statements being tolerated and the contrast with how I used to be treated that got me so fatalistic. There are a good few folks in the trades who genuinely don't care who you are and only pay attention to the quality of your work, but there are far more who claim to operate that way but pretty openly presume incompetence from anyone but white dudes. It definitely made work harder after learning how much of a majority really is in the latter, though oddly enough every single coworker who's gotten inappropriately fresh with me was also in that category.

Noah: Oh, wow. I mean, if it's any type of gender-consolation, I don't think anyone is a "real woman" if they haven't felt like a prey animal around trades guys at some point in their life. Welcome to the team, girly!

May: Oop! Yeah, the most unpleasant side effect of HRT has definitely been the uptick in dudes being creepy or threatening. It's not like I wasn't warned, but the baseline tolerance of violent misogyny in the US is absolutely terrifying.

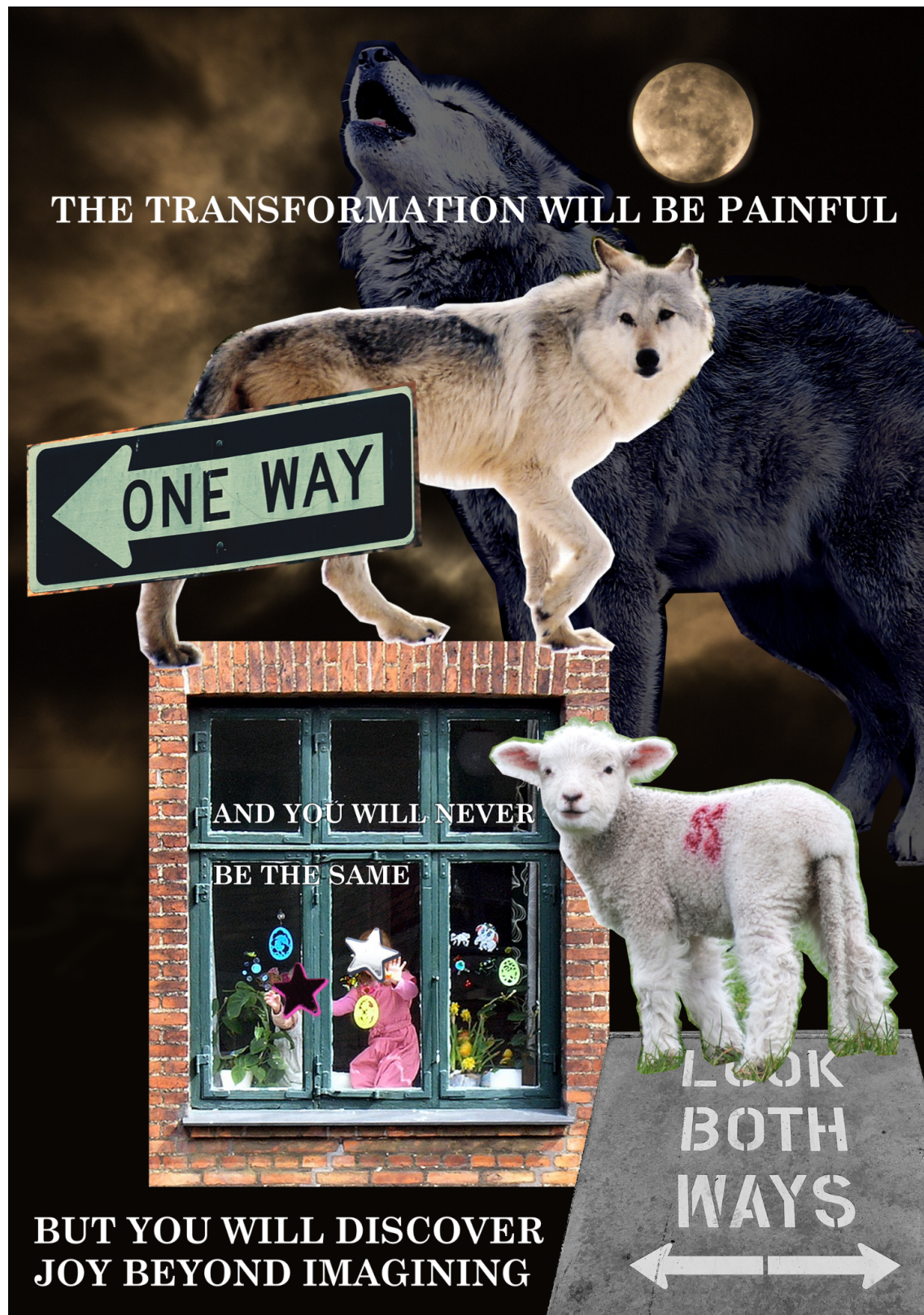
Noah: Yeah, it's a fucking nightmare out here. Anyways, I appreciate you telling me about your experiences. As the final question, do you have any socio-political commentary about anything that you'd like to use the rest of the interview talking about? Anything at all, gender-related, class-related, whatever you want.

May: I will never stop yelling that it all comes back around to police abolition. When wealth is extracted from the working class, leaving us without our basic needs met and in perpetual precarity, that's backed up with a cop's gun. The third of the US actively pushing for totalitarian conservative rule and indiscriminate violence against certain people sees consistent support from the police. The criminalization of trans healthcare will be gleefully carried out by pigs. They surveil, infiltrate and sabotage movements for positive change, help break strikes, criminalize those with nonconforming neurology and regularly execute people in the street for perceived disrespect. We can't make progress with that gun to our backs, and if you think they're scared to shoot you're not paying attention.

“Wolf”

Jester “Jackknife” Roach (ze/hir/he/it)

@jackknife-roach (Tumblr)



“Revival”

Erik (he/him)

@midnighthymns (Tumblr)

the transmutation of the body is the dominion of the divine
the human experience is the potential to be sacred
I am made as clay and partake in the ritual of becoming
my communion is sweet wine of testosterone and time
I weave tapestries with self mythologies
I revel in the radiance of renewal

the alchemy of the self is the sanctification of the holy
the transformation of muscle and sinew becomes the altar to my prayers
my voice is a sigil it serves to keep vigil
remembering the tears and years to get here
my testament of will is the way the scars cut through my chest
my heartbeat is a choir of defiance as I choose to thrive instead

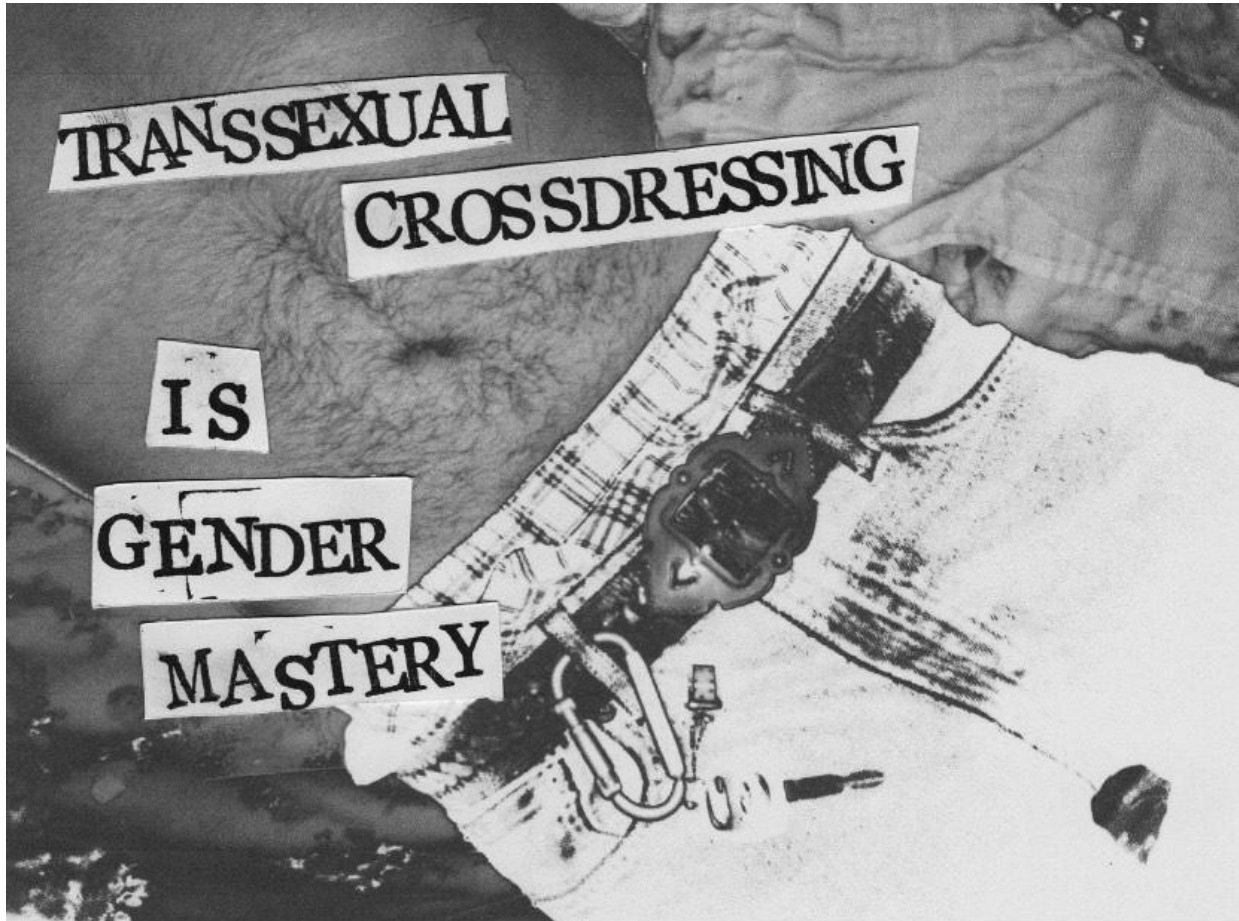
society fears the product of the self
they prefer the death of creation
it's a blaspheming decision to choose to rejoice
and spit in the face of predestination
the profound decision to venerate the living and defy
the religious existential dread

crucify the idea that the self is constant
the truest perfection is man-made
my body is a temple and I am its god
hallowed be my name.

“TRANSSEXUAL CROSSDRESSING”

Magnolia (she/her)

@fagnoliaa (Instagram)



“Genesis”
Benjamin Rosenfeldt (he/him)
@flashsidewayss (Twitter, Tumblr)

My ink press is filled with testosterone;
This Bible begins with a syringe.

In the beginning God created the heavens & the earth.
& we are all made in His image,
Aren't we?

God knows every hair on my head
& every freckle on my shoulders
& He made my breasts knowing
I would chop them off.

I am Guernica;
I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

He created man and took woman from his rib
& I carve ribs into my own chest.

In the beginning God created the heavens & the earth.
& He has always known me —
He knew me before I was in my mother's womb —
& He knows me still.

God asked Abraham to sacrifice his laughter;
God asked my father to sacrifice his delight;
Using a knife to cut out my vocal chords
& replace them with thicker ones.
My father cried, as Abraham did;
This time He did not stay his hand.

God said let there be light

& let there be a boy who makes himself
& he will be in my image;

Behold!
I am making all things new!

I am made lovingly in God's image —
& made lovingly by my own two hands.

He let Adam name the creatures;

& he let me name myself.

“47th”

Sebastião Fonseca (he/him)

@skeyeseb (Instagram, Tumblr)

Friday night

I'm taking **S****H****O****T****S** ~~with my friends~~
by myself

Another month has passed



I feel the
V**i****S****C****O****U****S**
fluid entering
my body

I'm **t****i****r****e****D** of this cycle.

But then I look in the mirror,

a handsome

M**A****N**

looking back at

M**E**

And I feel at

P**E****A****C****E**



“Haircut”

Noah Schimnowski, they/them
@chomperz__ (Instagram)



Survey Responses

1. **State your name as you would like it published.**

Adrian

2. **State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.**

She/he

3. **How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.**

Nonsense. I've given up. I think i spent so much time fixating on gender that i forgot i can just exist. Its ok if i cant describe my identity fully comprehensibly. Its freeing to just be.

4. **What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?**

I have a nose ring and lobe piercings. I want tattoos. Gender related stuff is expensive but I'd get on hormones if it were simple.

5. **Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?**

Let people exist if they aren't hurting anyone with an identity they can't change.

6. **Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?**

2d from gorillaz has something going on that i want. Also gerard way because the way they express gender feels like something i can relate to and look up to. How he shows different aspects of gender expression and all that.

7. **What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?**

Personally being neurodivergent has impacted my gender view since my brain is fundamentally different from the average one.

*

1. **State your name as you would like it published.**

Barry

2. **State your pronouns as you would like them published.**

they/them/he

3. **How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.**

lesbian

4. **What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?**

none right now, I'd love to get tattoos and maybe some piercings and i've been considering small doses of T¹

5. **Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?**

more than i could summarize in this space.

6. **Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?**

GERARD WAY!!!! Katherine hepburn uhhh. that little fucking guy from smiling friends. the one with the hat that speaks like mrhmrahra. Divine, of course. who else? inklings from splatoon. Carrie from carrie. gerard way again i found him at 13 and they really changed the game.

7. **What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?**

¹ "T" is shorthand for Testosterone.

I def think my jewishness and my experience w neurodivergency have impacted my gender, as well as privileges like being comfortably middle class and white which of course heavily affect my experience w my own gender as well as the concept of gender altogether

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Benjamin Rosenfeldt

2. State your pronouns as you would like them published.

he/him

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Transmasculine² bisexual baby. They're interconnected!

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

I have a few piercings and an appt. for a tattoo next month! I am starting T hopefully soon (family is taking it very hard and I want to be financially independent before starting) and plan on chopping these tits off asap.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

I mean. I'm fairly young. I haven't seen a ton of the world. But queer people are here and are beautiful. I will vote whenever I can and do more if I must.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Elliot Page, honestly. His coming out really resonated with me as it was at a point in my life where I was struggling to come out to people. They gave me some courage and a lot of hope. I have time. I will get there. Also, embarrassingly, Shawn Spencer from Psych (2006). He's also a transfag in my opinion.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

I grew up evangelical Christian. I don't really classify myself as a Christian lately but I do believe in God, somewhat. Being trans while also believing in God—let alone LOVING God—is a lot. But I like to believe we are made in God's image, and God is the original Creator, right?

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Charlie

2. State your pronouns as you would like them published.

He / It

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Gayboy, queer, trans

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

Non gender related: many piercings and tattoos. Constant changes in hair colour. Gender related: none as of yet but plans to go on testosterone

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

We should all look out for others within our community despite our differences because community is all we have. Queer people should be able to live how we like without disturbance from those it upsets. Being trans is about joy and community and freedom. Infighting in the community serves nobody. All anybody wants is love and joy.

² A term used to describe someone assigned female at birth whose gender is more masculine-leaning.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Gerard Way since the day I saw him on a poster in my sister's room at age seven. Showed me how to embrace femininity and masculinity at the same time. Showed me the joy in self expression.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

Being raised poor and Catholic meant I grew up feeling a lot of guilt surrounding the person I knew I was. There were many expectations placed upon me to be a perfect daughter and if I did anything else I wasn't living up to my potential. It took a lot of unlearning to convince myself that I'm not doing anything wrong by being who I am.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Charlie Clark

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

He/they

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Genderfluid³, Genderqueer⁴, Genderfucked⁵

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

Tattoos, piercings, working out. Started T last year.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Healthcare quality may be on a downward slide atm, but the queer community still deserves to be treated with quality healthcare, without hate and hurtful comments throughout the process. The housing market may be on a downward slide rn, but the queer community still deserves healthy housing, with neighbors and landlords that aren't actively trying to bully them, kill them, and treat them badly because of things they can't change about themselves.

Asking the queer community to mask qualities about themselves that you feel uneasy about will not negate the reality of those harmless qualities

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Gerard Way, Angel (from RENT), HIM (from PPG), Ha Ji-Won (from Secret Garden). They solidified that just because someone feels a certain gender, they don't have to have what the community considers classic qualities of that gender to be accepted as that gender

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

I grew up in a close knit poor community, and doing so made being queer easier. We are becoming increasingly common in my community, and the only people who tended to be against us are the people who grew up in the South, or the rare-richer or super religious families of the community. I grew up in a school where the boy's athletics constantly wore pink in support of the girl's athletics. The athletic department was constantly changing when meets and practice were so their players could easily go to play practice. The average age of people coming out to their families were middle school age, and the school and community would work with your family to get them to support you, or take you in as their own if they didn't. I got lucky.

³ A gender within the nonbinary umbrella term, used to describe one's experience with a gender that shifts over time.

⁴ A gender that's vague and ambiguous, but definitely queer.

⁵ A gender that's categorized as a, "fuck it, I don't care anymore" feeling.

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Crow

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

they/them

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

gender is gnc⁶ and genderfluid, I have thought of pangender⁷ but that label doesn't fit me. I'm a girlboy and boygirl in one. I consider myself demisexual⁸, demiromantic⁹, and bi.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

standard ear piercings and a septum piercing. I want to get tattoos of meaningful things, preferably on my legs. my sibling has promised me to get us matching tattoos of cats for a future birthday, as cats have been a huge part of our lives since childhood. I also want to get a tattoo of a violet, both because of the queerness attached to it and because it's my birth flower. And lastly, I want to get a tattoo with a lyric from Bikini Kill's song "R.I.P" in honor of a trans person I knew who sadly passed away to suicide. I obviously want to be covered in tattoos, those are just some I've been thinking of the most.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Labels aren't necessary. they can help you understand yourself and explain to others how you feel, but you don't have to use labels and you don't have to identify 100% to the definition with the labels. labels are just words and are made to put each other in boxes. use labels all you want but don't get sour if someone uses their own labels "incorrectly".

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

there are a lot, but my primary ones are Gerard Way, Joan Jett, and Till Lindemann. Way performs femininity in a genuine way but still in a way that can't be sanitized by the media. They take the parts of femininity I've always wanted to do but never felt comfortable with due to the stigma around it and turn it into something weird and beautiful. Jett performs masculinity in this comedic and camp yet serious way, she's making fun of the macho culture masculinity is often associated with while still embracing masculinity. The Runaways, one of Jett's bands, was literally made because Joan and her friends were told "you can't do that" and they decided "fuck you I can do it anyways!". Lindemann takes masculinity on stage like it's drag, he makes it fucked up and weird and funny and disgusting while still feeling genuine. Rammstein (Lindemann's band) has always used political satire to get their points across, and often uses their overdramatic version of masculinity to make these macho metal dudes look at real life problems they fuel and think to themselves.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

I'm autistic so I've never really understood the points of there only being two genders. There are so many more colors than just blue and red, right? I grew up getting bullied for a lot of things, but my autism was one of the primary reasons, and so I've always felt alienated from the concept of gender. I've grown up atheist (with a few aspects of paganism thrown in) in a very religious city in sweden, these pastors and members of the church has always tried to make me conform to their gender norms. But I'm stubborn, so of course I'm not going to let them get what they want. I am aware that being white and middle class has given me a lot of privilege in the

⁶ Shorthand for Gender Non-Conforming.

⁷ Having all genders at once.

⁸ One who only feels sexual attraction to someone after they've formed a strong emotional bond with them.

⁹ Someone who only develops romantic feelings for another person when they have a strong emotional connection to them.

community, and I constantly try to learn about other people's experiences with gender, and that has opened new doors to me in the gender house.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Elías C.

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

elle/él they/he

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Not and never a woman, very fem one day very masc the other, sometimes neither sometimes both, would never know if I've been a man (probably have been). Attraction almost as fluid as my gender, strong preference for women at this moment. Labels? Generally I use nonbinary and bisexual.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

Every body modification I've done is at least a little gender-related. I have 7 piercing and 3 tattoos, on my way to get many many more of both. I also plan on getting top surgery and getting my uterus removed.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

We deserve to exist, no matter what.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

I don't have icons nor idols I envy. But every queer person I've come across has impacted my life, even if just a little or for a short time.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

Religion, ethnicity, class and neurodivergence on a more personal and direct level. Race, ability and others I don't remember, more so on a comparative level.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Gabriel Ezekiel

2. State your pronouns as you would like them published.

They He It

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

I am a zipper tit¹⁰ queer with love for my found family angel sinner a he that isn't all he but an it creature multiple people that change every day

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

I took testosterone for 2 years but went off it and plan to get top surgery, i also want to get my tongue split

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Let the kids explore who they are, let my friends who have many lovers get married, and get puritanical ideals out of laws

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Psycho Jenny from Devilman Crybaby, their devil form helped me feel safe as someone who feels like a creature and put a visual representation to how I feel sometimes. Holli from

¹⁰ Typically used as a derogatory term to refer to someone assigned female at birth who has undergone a voluntary double mastectomy. The "zipper" is in reference to the scar tissue left across the chest post-op. The "tits" is in reference to the fact that there used to be breasts there.

Cool World, her use of sexuality and sensuality really struck a cord in me to explore that part of myself and her expression is just so cool, and a lot of mecha anime that showed ppl with cyborg bodies, gender

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

I think being white has given me the privilege to be able to explore and express myself as openly as I do, I have the comfort of being able to go into a queer space and be accepted because of my white skin, that has also led me to be very introspective of how i use that privilege and where to give and create space and belonging for black and brown lgbt people. I've never been very religious but I do enjoy aspects of spirituality, I see angels as a part of my gender but more in the aesthetical way that in the practicing religion way. Feeling like there's an energy that flows between people and things and nature does make it feel easier to see gender and sexuality as more of a fluid than fixed thing though. Growing up lower middle class gave me access to a space that really cultivated a space for me to explore myself in middle and high school. I went to a public arts school that had a large population of trans and queer people that made me feel safe and create a family that supported me in my endeavors. Having situations of money scarcity also showed me that having access to gender affirming care is treated as a privilege in our society as well when it should be open access for people to be able to trans their gender as they please. Being disabled in the queer community mentally has created a sense of fluidity in gender for me, trauma that has caused a dissociative disorder helps me to understand gender is whatever you want or need it to be in the moment and there isn't a need to keep it fixed. Being physically disabled doesn't entirely effect how i view gender but it does help me want to support those that have more severe disabilities than mine to feel welcomed in a given space.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Harvey

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

He/him

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

I'm a faggot through and through.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

I have two nose piercings, my ears pierced, my lip pierced, and I had my gallbladder removed if that counts as a non gender-related body modification. I plan on getting my name legally changed, getting top surgery, and using a packer. I'm too vain to risk hair loss and too much of a hypochondriac, otherwise I'd get on testosterone.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

I think it's a shame that queerness is considered something to have a political opinion *on*, you know? Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are the things the Declaration of Independence says we're entitled to. For me, life *is* being queer. Liberty *is* being queer. The pursuit of happiness is the pursuit of being openly queer. If some folks don't love that, I understand (not really), but I don't think that means they should step on my right—the same way I wouldn't step on theirs. I don't make a fuss over men who work 9-5s and fall asleep to Jeopardy reruns, so why do they make a fuss over men who do drag? Or men who kiss men? It shouldn't be political. It should be loving your neighbor and minding your own business.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Dorian Gray from The Picture of Dorian Gray. I'm a sucker for androgynous dandies with an effeminate streak, they know how to make a pansy feel at home in his skin.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

[Respondent skipped this question]

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Jester "Jackknife" Roach

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

ze/hir/it/he

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

i'm a transsexual genderqueer bisexual faggot with dyke tendencies.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

i had my ears pierced in highschool but don't feel too strongly about it gender-wise, however my septum jewelry (black spikes) is integral to my gender performance. i want to get tattoos at some point to make this body feel lived in. something spooky and weird that makes people look away. far in my future i dare to hope for HRT and a breast reduction for a little gothic androgyny but it's a long way off.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

the state should never be involved in my gender or my body or who i want to fuck. i get to choose who i am and what i do and i'm explaining it to no one but my lover and my friends. fuck cops, queer cops are fucking traitors and no longer one of us. pigs do not protect people they protect the state and its laws and if queerness is illegal then they will punish us for it.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

i find gerard way, lestat lioncourt (interview with a vampire) and aragorn (lord of the rings) to be gender icons for me. they all have a certain non-traditional femininity to them, and in the case of lestat and aragorn are men with feminine aspects. seeing gerard way be shamelessly "queer" in their presentation helped me realize that i'm allowed that too. i'm allowed that femininity that clashes and compliments my masculinity.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

i find a lot of mateship with other working class folks, specifically those in a trade. the "one of the boys" experience has been integral to my journey of gender and sexuality discovery. i also feel as though being autistic has coloured my perception of the world in interesting ways that are far too complex to untense here. but my tendency to ignore rules that i think are stupid also applies to the hegemonic structures of gender and sexuality currently in place in our society.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Julio

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

He/him

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Transfag bisexual

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

ears pierced, chest bound. I plan on top surgery and HRT, maybe even phallo¹¹

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

¹¹ Shorthand for Phalloplasty, a surgical operation that constructs a phallus through skin grafts.

The moment we started prioritizing being palatable for the cishets¹² of the world was the moment we lost sight of what the movement is really about. Its about being respected as we are, not seeking to be something that they think is worthy of respect. We are like them in the sense that we are all people, but we are UNLIKE them in many many ways as well. That being said, there cannot be true acceptance until everyone realizes that we don't have to understand to respect.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Dean Winchester. He's a pretty boy, but undeniably masculine. Seeing cis characters struggle with their gender identities being questioned reminds me that gender nonconformity and the judgment of its presence is present in all sorts of people. Societal standards hurt us all.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

People are going to see me as more aggressive than a white trans man. People will say that I'm not trans enough because of how long its taking me to undergo my medical transition. As a woman I would be too masculine, too hairy, but as a man I am lacking.

*

1. State your name as you would like it to be published.

Leah Long

2. State your pronouns as you would like them to be published.

she/her

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

The only terms I feel fully comfortable with these days are trans and queer, as I think transfem is limiting, and lesbian doesn't really fit anymore (however, dyke still resonates). I have identified as nonbinary and genderqueer in the past and nothing has really changed about my gender since then, but people will use any excuse to degender a "trans woman" and so I stay away from those words. Woman, girl, and boy are all okay, but only when used by the right people in the right context.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

For financial reasons I haven't pursued any non gender-related body modifications, but I've been on feminizing HRT for nearly a year and a half now, and last fall I started undergoing laser hair removal, which is still in progress.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Queerness to me is more of a political position than an identity. When I call myself queer, I'm speaking of a radical acceptance and commitment to the freaks of the world, and a political project to decenter "normality" in all its forms.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

What comes to mind is that picture of Susan Kare sitting back in her chair with her tennis shoes on the desk. Icon.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

Being autistic has resulted in a lack of commitment to gender, sexuality, and identity in general. I think a degree of freedom from certain aspects of the social world has allowed me to be more easygoing about how I present. I just do what feels right in the moment. Most labels only fit from time to time.

¹² Shorthand for cisgender and heterosexual.

*

1. **State your name as you would like it published.**
Marius
2. **State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.**
it/its
3. **How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.**
queer
4. **What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?**
I have piercings and I want tattoos.
5. **Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?**
Nope
6. **Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?**
Gerard Way in the Danger Days era, I don't know he's just.. got the vibes.
7. **What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?**
Because I speak English I don't have the same binary/gendered language around me that others might have.¹³

*

1. **State your name as you would like it published.**
My name is Matt.
2. **State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.**
My pronouns are they/them or any others, really.
3. **How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.**
My sexuality is queer, of some sort, involving asexuality¹⁴, aromanticism¹⁵ and bi/pansexuality. My gender is kinda trans masc enby¹⁶ who really likes having tits, but is closer to male than female. I like describing myself as queer squared for fun.
4. **What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?**
My ears were pierced when i was really young, but i wouldn't mind a couple more on my ears, and maybe some nipple piercings. I don't think i want top surgery, but maybe a simple release¹⁷ of my tdick¹⁸ is something i might look into.
5. **Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?**
there's a lot of medicalisation of transness, when there really doesn't have to be, especially for trans kids, and I think it makes it really hard for people to explore their gender.
6. **Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?**
[Respondent skipped this question.]
7. **What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?**

¹³ Editor's note: The English language is, in fact, highly gendered and highly binary.

¹⁴ A lack of sexual attraction to others, or low or absent interest in or desire for sexual activity.

¹⁵ An umbrella term used by people who don't typically experience romantic attraction.

¹⁶ Slang term for Nonbinary.

¹⁷ Referring to "clitoral release surgery", formally known as metoidioplasty. It is a gender-affirming, lower body surgery that creates a penis by cutting ligaments around the erectile tissue (clitoris) to release it from the pubis and give the shaft more length (4 to 6 cm).

¹⁸ Slang term for Bottom Growth, also known as Clitoral Growth, one of the effects of Testosterone on someone assigned female at birth. It causes the clitoris to enlarge into what looks like a small phallus.

I'm autistic and i think that really affects how I view gender as a concept and also my gender specifically. A lot of things feel like games that people play along to without saying anything, and gender is one of those things to me. I never really understood the rules and so I didn't play, but people thought me weird for it (among other things).

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

My name is Michael.

2. State your pronouns as you would like them published.

My pronouns are he and him.

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

I am a gay FTM transsexual.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

My body modifications have been slim so far. I suppose this could be gender-related, but I got earrings when I was in elementary school. Unfortunately the holes closed up after I took the earrings out too soon. I'm kind of tempted to get them re-pierced. I have yet to have any gender-related surgeries or go on T, though I plan to get T and top¹⁹. Bottom²⁰ just doesn't seem necessary for my happiness.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Those laws that say that people have to use the bathroom that correlates with their birth-assigned sex not just infuriates me but confuses me, because it will make absolutely nobody happy. Like, yeah this sucks for us, but conservatives would shit themselves if they saw any big burly trans man going to the ladies room and vice versa. I am aware that laws like this are solely to make us so miserable that we all die, but still.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Those guys from Linkin Park. Also, both from the X-Men: Rictor and Chamber. They're totally bitchin'. As for "impact", I just think they're cool. Though I did mention previously how I wanted to pierce my ears, so I guess that kinda plays into it, haha.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

[Respondent skipped this question.]

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Near

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

He/Key(/kem/keir)/It

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

My gender can be described as transneu²¹/masc/fem agender²², and my sexual orientation is gay, always gay, in every which direction.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

¹⁹ Referring to top surgery, in this case a voluntary double mastectomy.

²⁰ Referring to bottom surgery, which could be in the form of phalloplasty or metoidioplasty.

²¹ Shorthand for Transneutral, a gender identity that is predominantly neutral.

²² Not having a gender or a "lack of" a gender.

I've gotten my ears and my eyebrow pierced, and I plan on piercing my bridge, more piercings on my ears, two on my upper lip, as well as multiple tattoos relating in some way to identity or identity-relevant experiences. I'm planning on undergoing top surgery and having a hysterectomy.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

In order to truly receive the freedom and equality we deserve, queerness needs to become aggressive and whole, rather than passive and separated. Transgender rights will continue to fall if there isn't an attempt to force them back. Stonewall was a riot, and they've forgotten it happened at all.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Gerard Way can absolutely be considered a gender envy icon for me, but more in a way of mutual understanding and gradual growth. Gerard has fully bloomed into themselves and their gender identity, which they have suppressed for years and only recently truly come to terms with, and to see that growth and happiness occur so much later than most would think is so much more motivating and inspiring to me than most other stories. Their resilience and ability to be loved by so many while they wear skirts and prance around with a huge smile is so, so motivating.

They've allowed me to believe that things can get better, because I can see it right in front of me.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

My father is Greek, and I was raised in the Greek Orthodox Church. His traditional and conservative ways of life influenced by his religious upbringing surrounding orthodoxy and community has left me to grieve at the same altars and kiss the silver icon of Mary wearing shame around my neck. I think this experience with the Church has left me with a more spiritual understanding of my gender nonetheless, because I can disconnect from the parish and my father, but still find the comfort of hymns and the spirituality within Greece that influence my gender because it influences the core of my being.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Punk

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

He/him

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Transmasc

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

Tattoos

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Queerness is about defying the norm when the norm is forced upon you and the act of defiance is criminalized.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Spencer Charnas, it's about the blood and gore and seemingly effortless to look good. Also Gerard Way, both before I knew they were nonbinary and after. The dark messy tumbled hair and desperate artist vibes that have grown up to be an adult and now openly cross dress and seem happier.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

Plurality affects my gender in a way that it almost feels like a lie to say that my name is Punk and I use he/him because I'm not even sure I exist. I'm just a figment of my own imagination, an alternate reality where I'm trans trying to push the boundaries of not changing myself so much that the host can't love her body but trying to be free in myself for my own gender presentation. Which makes a sort of gender fluidity especially when we don't feel that plural at all and instead simply feel as though we are just "me" and that "I" can contain multitudes.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Ransom Jones

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

he/they

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Overall I just call myself queer because it's easier than explaining "exclusively t4t²³ vaguely aroace²⁴ maybe-bi maybe-gay transmasculine feminine nonbinary." Alternatively, gender: goth clown

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

I have five tattoos (with plans for many more) and a few piercings (I'd get more if it wasn't for complications). Starting T soon and then who knows where we're going from there.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Queer infighting will tear us apart. Who cares how people label themselves. Get cops out of pride. Seek out community and learn your history and love each other as much as you can.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Noel Fielding as Vince Noir was my first exposure to androgyny and definitely shaped how my gender would turn out. Gerard Way and Frank Iero for various hairstyles and aesthetics and Gerards recent stage outfits. That one episode of Always Sunny where Mac briefly wears a wedding dress. Truly I will latch onto any man expressing femininity.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

I think coming from a very working class background has made me very DIY in all aspects of life but especially in gender has forced me to adapt and play with expression more than I would have done if I'd had access to private healthcare younger. For a long time I got myself invested in the history of working class East London gay men and modeled myself on campness and the code speak of Polari. Similarly with my chronic pain, I had to stop binding²⁵ years ago and now I have made myself more comfortable with being a guy with tits. I think gender is a very individual experience even to cis people and is so tied to your life experiences.

*

1. State your name as you would like it to be published.

Rhiley

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

they/them

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

²³ Shorthand for Transgender-for-Transgender, in which a trans person exclusively dates other trans people.

²⁴ Shorthand for aromantic and asexual.

²⁵ Referring to chest binding, which is when someone with breast tissue will wear a garment or garments that compress the tissue into a flatter, more "masculine" chest.

pre-transition transgender woman, androphilic (masculinity attracted)

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

I have done many tattoos and piercings. I plan on starting hormone replacement therapy for MTF gender transition, I plan on facial feminization surgery, and total body laser hair removal.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

Older gay men (all races) need to stop fetishizing and preying upon younger gay males (youth), since the power dynamic and abusive conditions do lead to toxic structures within a dynamic. Youth do not understand what they are looking for or into in regards to sex or romance, and if Leo DiCaprio can be called weird for dating women significantly younger than him, then gay men (in my anecdotal case in West Hollywood) can be called out for predatory dating preferences that target young gays.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Nancy from The Craft. Her rebellion and unhinged feminine rage is one I connected to as a child before I had words to explain what I was feeling. Angelina Jolie in Gia, Jodie Foster in Silence of the Lambs, Winona Ryder (actress and as Susanna in girl interrupted) were all integral characters to my self actualization and understanding of myself as a trans person. They display characteristics of repose and vitriol mixed in with broodiness and chaos... which as a very suicidal teenager with diagnosed mental issues could relate to easily.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

Gender is not just made from binary colonialism. The roots of binary gender do come from imperialism but the descendant cultures and values have grown into their own as time passes around the world. I firmly believe the rest of this question are highly specific to each person.

*

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Rory

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

they/them it/its

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

queer, transsexual, faggot, girlboy and boygirl, all over the place, fairy, bisexual

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

all my modifications are tied to my gender and making myself feel at home in my body. i am on testosterone. i have multiple face piercings and tattoos. i would love to get top surgery at some point, and have heart shaped nipples

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

do whatever the fuck you want, gender and sexuality are social constructs and there are no rules. don't dull down your identity and presentation for the approval of others.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

i don't get "gender envy" from people. i draw inspiration from others in my life, the ways they dress, how they present themselves, but i wouldn't say i am envious of others. i am very confident in the ways i express and present myself.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

i am autistic and this directly impacts my experience of gender. while i am not a woman, i am an autistic woman. i think the rules of gender are silly and that people should do what they want. chronic pain impacts my presentation — i am not able to have as elaborate gender presentation with clothes/makeup if i am having a pain flare.

1. State your name as you would like it published.

Stego

2. State your preferred pronouns as you would like them to be published.

they/them

3. How would you describe your gender and sexual orientation? Use any and all words you feel comfortable with.

Gender to me is vague. Inherently queer and like a mix of lots of different genders. My sexuality is queer and asexual.

4. What non gender-related body modifications have you done? What do you plan on doing? How about gender-related modifications?

I've had no modifications yet, but I'd like top surgery (I wear a binder usually currently) and to take t until my voice drops. But I'm not planning on taking t indefinitely, because I would like to appear like somewhere in between male and female.

5. Do you have any political opinions surrounding queerness that you'd like to share?

I know that fighting for acceptance is a long journey but it's incredibly frustrating how slowly political parties move with any changes to legislatures to increase queer acceptance. Same goes for how some people treat us, how they can't see beyond a narrow world view they view as infallible.

6. Who do you consider gender envy icons and why? These can be real people or fictional characters. How have they impacted you?

Gerard Way is my number one. The way they've expressed themselves, nowadays but also pre-breakup²⁶ has always been an inspiration to me. The eccentric way he performs is something I strive towards for my own expression. The music definitely also plays a role in that, though.

7. What intersections between race, class, ability, religion, ethnicity, etc. have impacted how you view your gender?

I'm autistic, so I think I inherently view gender differently than an allistic²⁷ person would. To me gender is more of a fashion accessory than an identity, since my own identity is so vague. I don't really know how other people perceive their gender, how it feels to them, why a certain label fits. It's not inherently understandable to me at all.

²⁶ Referring to the breakup of the band My Chemical Romance, which Gerard Way is the lead singer of.

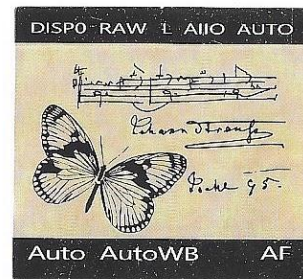
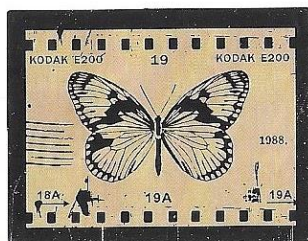
²⁷ Someone who isn't autistic.



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Everyone who took time out of their day to respond to my survey with such thoughtful, thorough answers. K.M. Claude, for sharing my open submissions post and siccing his horde of trans followers on me - I would not have gotten nearly as many wonderful submissions as I have if it wasn't for that. All of the writers and artists that submitted such gorgeous pieces, and who I hope to work with again in the future. Sean Carswell, for forcing me to make zines as assignments. I appreciate you all tremendously, and I can't thank you enough.

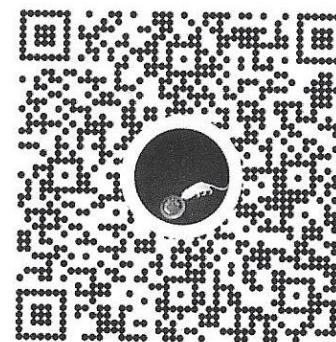
- Noah



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